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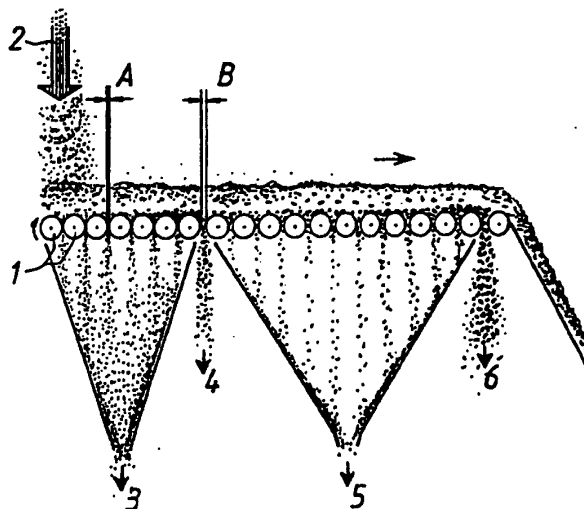
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(54) **Method and apparatus for removing impurities from pulverized or chipped material, especially wood chip and fiber materials**

(57) The invention relates to a method and apparatus for screening pulverized or chip material, such as fibers or wood chips, free from impurities. The material to be screened is fed onto a roll set formed by a number of adjacent, essentially parallel rolls (1) and is brought to an advantageous movement with the help of said rolls

(1), whereby material particles of highest density drift downward closest to the surfaces of the rolls and that the material fraction closest to the roll surfaces can escape the rolls via a gap (B) having a width essentially larger than the gap width (A) of the preceding roll pairs.



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Description

The present invention relates to a method according to the preamble of claim 1. The invention also concerns an apparatus according to the preamble of claim 5.

Pulverized and chipped materials comprise, e.g., different kinds of fibers and wood chips used in the manufacture of particleboard/fiberboard and similar products. Such boards are made increasingly from residue materials. Resultingly, a need arises for removing impurities from the raw material stock. Typical impurities comprise different minerals, rocks, sand and similar particulates. In the board manufacturing process, the content of impurities significantly affects the wear rate of tools such as different cutting means employed in the finishing operations of boards made from residue materials. Hence, a variety of screening methods has been developed. Known in the art are arrangements in which mere blowing by air is used for separating impurities from the raw material. Such embodiments are handicapped by high specific energy consumption and dust emissions. Moreover, extremely fine impurity particulates are not removed in a desired manner by air blowing, whereby the end result of the screening operation remains unsatisfactory.

It is an object of the present invention to provide an entirely novel method and apparatus for removing impurities from pulverized or chip material, said method and apparatus being free from the disadvantages of conventional techniques.

The invention is characterized in what is stated in the annexed claims.

The arrangement according to the invention offers a number of significant benefits. Mechanical screening of impurities offers an essential reduction in specific energy consumption with regard to separation with air blowing alone. The screening apparatus will become smaller and easy to combine with a roll set screen, for instance. Furthermore, the material fractions pre-cleaned or fractionated with the help of the method according to the invention can be easier and more effectively handled in further processing by means of, e.g., other post-screening apparatuses.

By arranging the screen roll set to have the narrower slits between the rolls at the intake end of the apparatus, it will be possible to screen away fines such as silt that are otherwise extremely difficult or even impossible to remove by pneumatic means, for instance.

In the following the invention will be examined with the help of a preferred exemplifying embodiment by making reference to the appended drawing in which the screening process by means of the screen roll set according to the invention is illustrated diagrammatically.

The screening method according to the invention is based on the use of a roll set. The material to be screened is taken and fed by means of conventional

feed elements (not shown) onto the roll set, at its intake end, advantageously spread in the cross-machine direction relative to the travel direction of the chips essentially over the entire width of the roll set. The roll set is formed by a plurality of adjacent, essentially parallel rolls 1, which are arranged to rotate clockwise (arrow) when viewed at the roll ends as shown in the diagram. The rolls are spaced from each other to provide gaps, preferably with individually adjustable widths, for each pair of adjacent rolls. A feasible adjustment method is disclosed in FI patent application no. 922,777. While the rolls are advantageously aligned in the same plane, other arrangements are also possible. For instance, the rolls can be stepped at increasing heights toward the exit end of the material.

Typically, the width A of the interroll gap at the intake end of the roll set is 0.2 - 0.5 mm. These leading rolls are followed by a gap having a width B essentially wider than the gap width A of the leading rolls. Typically, the gap width B is in the order of 1 - 2.5 mm. The width of the interroll gaps as well as their mutual staging are parameters that are obviously dependent on the material being screened. The rolls 1 may be provided with a surface texturing such as different kinds of grooves, for instance. The depth of such texturing may be varied, e.g., typically so that the grooves on the exit end rolls are deeper than in the intake end rolls.

Onto the intake end of the roll set is fed in the manner indicated by arrow 2 such raw material, e.g., residues that contain fibers and mixed therein impurities like minerals, e.g., sand and rocks. The rotating rolls 1 then transfer the material forward on the rolls and impart the material blanket resting on the rolls to undergo an advantageous movement such as an almost fluidized-bed state, whereby the material particulates of highest density drift downward closest to roll surfaces. Only the finest particulates 3 can pass through the interroll gaps A of the roll set 1. The fraction of fines 3 passing through the gaps A will be enriched with the fine particulates accumulated close to the surfaces of the rolls. The other fractions of the material including coarser impurities running closest to the surfaces of the rolls will be moved forward along the roll set. As the material blanket reaches the next wider gap B, the next fraction of impurities 4 closest to the rolls can here escape the rolls by passing through the gap B. Simultaneously, the major fraction is transferred over the gap B. Now, the major fraction of the material to be screened is cleaned free from impurities. Such clean material fraction can be transferred to further processing. The roll set may comprise a plurality of gaps, each wider than the preceding gap to perform in the above-described manner, whereby the screening process is iteratively repeated at each gap.

In the apparatus shown in the diagram, the first roll set is followed by a second roll set in which the particulate matter is screened via the interroll gaps into material fractions indicated by arrow 5, while the impurities indicated by arrow 6 are screened away through the exit

end gap and removed in same manner as described above for the roll set of wider roll gaps.

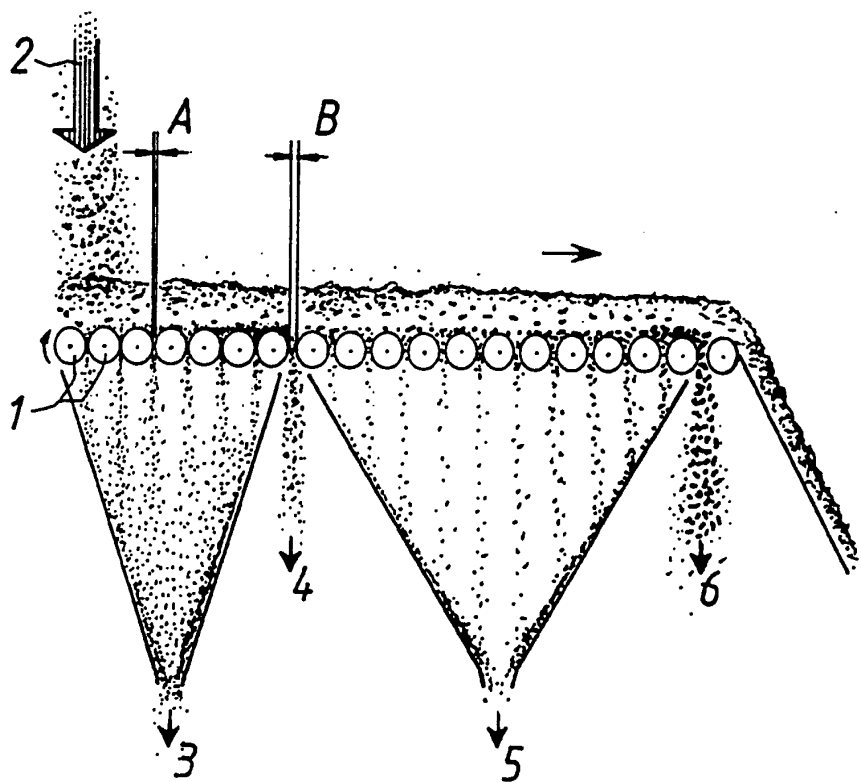
Means such as chutes are advantageously arranged under the rolls for taking the screened material fractions to further processing.

The method according to the invention may be easily adapted and the assembly according to the invention readily connected to existing roll set screen equipment. The invention finds important use in chipboard manufacture when combined with, e.g., the screening step following the drying step of chips.

To those versed in the art it obvious that the invention is not limited by the exemplifying embodiments described above, but rather, may be varied within the scope and spirit of the annexed claims.

Claims

1. A method of screening pulverized or chip material, such as fibers or wood chips, free from impurities, characterized in that the material to be screened is fed onto a roll set formed by a number of adjacent, essentially parallel rolls (1) and is brought to a movement with the help of said rolls (1), whereby material particles of highest density drift downward closest to the surfaces of the rolls and that the material fraction closest to the roll surfaces with the impurities enriched thereto can escape the rolls via a gap (B) having an essentially larger width than the gap width (A) of the preceding roll pairs.
2. A method as defined in claim 1, characterized in that a major portion of the screened material is passed via said gap (B) to further processing by, e.g., screening or postcleaning.
3. A method as defined in claim 1 or 2, characterized in that fine particulates (3) with fine impurities enriched thereto are removed via said gaps (A).
4. A method as defined in any of claims 1 - 3, characterized in that the material fraction removed from the roll set via said gaps (A) or said gap (B) is taken to further processing such as additional fractionation.
5. An apparatus for screening pulverized or chip material, such as fibers or wood chips, free from impurities, characterized in that said apparatus comprises a roll set formed by a number of adjacent, essentially parallel rotating rolls (1), that said roll set is provided with at least one interroll gap having a width (B) essentially larger than the gap width (A) of roll pairs preceding said wider gap on the path of the material blanket.
6. An apparatus as defined in claim 5, characterized in that the interroll gap width (A) is 0.2 - 0.5 mm typical, while the gap width (B) is 1 - 2.5 mm typical.
7. An apparatus as defined in claim 5 or 6, characterized in that the interroll gap widths (A, B) in the set of rolls (1) are made individually adjustable.
8. An apparatus as defined in any of claims 5 - 7, characterized in that the rolls (1) are provided with a surface texturing.





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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 96 10 1778

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE INVENTION (CLASS)
X	GB-A-2 004 772 (LUOSSAVAARA-KIIRUNAVAARA) * page 1, line 92 - page 2, line 92 *	5,7	B27N1/00 B07B1/14 D21B1/02
A	* figures *	1	
X	EP-A-0 483 742 (SUNDS DEFIBRATOR LOVIISA OY) * claims 1-3 *	5,7,8	
A	* figures *	1	
A	TAPPI JOURNAL, vol. 72, no. 9, September 1989, NORCROSS US, pages 143-150, XP000069046 D. SMITH: "The state of the art in chip fines screening" * page 148, left-hand column, line 4 - line 14 * * figures 3,4 *	1,5	B27N B07B D21B
A	EP-A-0 019 953 (METALLGESELLSCHAFT AG) * claims *	1,5	
A	* figures *		
A, D	DE-A-43 18 213 (SUNDS DEFIBRATOR LOVIISA OY) & FI-B-93 806 (SUNDS DEFIBRATOR LOVIISA OY) -----		
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 30 May 1996	Examiner Laval, J
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons</p> <p>& : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

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